

Position Description
Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District
Conservation Technician

Position Title: Conservation Technician

Date Posted: February 6, 2023

Dates of Employment: March 15 – September 15, 2023. There is potential for this position to become full time, permanent with benefits, depending on funding availability.

Pay Range: \$22.00 - \$25.00 /hour (DOE). Under this classification, the employee is ineligible for benefits.

Supervisor: HRSWCD District Manager

Status: Full Time (40 hrs/ week), non-exempt limited duration (6 months, <180 hours). This position may be hired at the full time or part time schedule. Work may also fluctuate with project needs.

General Position Summary:

The Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District (HRSWCD) is a special district serving Hood River County to provide a wide range of natural resource, technical, educational, and financial assistance. The HRSWCD is a small district comprised of two employees and a five-member board. The Conservation Technician is a new position and will serve as an integral member of the HRSWCD team. Work duties will take place in both the field and the office. The primary duties of the Technician will be to implement a wildfire defensible space program. Tasks will include working with residents to conduct education on defensible space best practices through yard debris pick up events, mobile chipping, and direct service defensible space work. The Technician will oversee landowner outreach and education, managing sign-ups for a mobile chipping program, communicating with the Mount Adams Resource Stewards to accomplish the chipping work, work with the Oregon State Fire Marshal's office to conduct home hazard assessments, and organize further defensible space work as needed. This project and position are primarily funded by the Oregon State Fire Marshall through the SWCD and will be implemented in partnership with the Hood River Forest Collaborative and the Mount Adams Resource Stewards. This position will also have the potential to expand and assist with other SWCD projects as time allows and skills align. Work may include assistance with water quality sampling, salmon spawning surveys, plant sale assistance, weed work, workshop assistance, help with social media outreach, educational materials development, participate in local relevant working groups.

Location:

Working location is Hood River County and the office location is 3007 Experiment Station Dr., Hood River, OR 97031.

Specific Job Duties:

1. Schedule and implement nine (9) debris pick up and defensible space days for target residents, front loaded in the spring to meet demand.
2. Prioritize defensible space work for the county's socially vulnerable residents living within high priority fuel management areas as identified in the county's 2019 Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
3. Provide feedback on program qualifying criteria and use the criteria to register eligible participants for vegetation mitigation and defensible space work.
4. Educate vulnerable populations on defensible space and home ignition zone best practices.
Note: Training will be provided to the applicant prior to working with landowners.
5. Reduce hazardous fuels around homes in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) while maintaining equity and public health objectives.
6. Assist with the formation of Firewise communities.
7. Attend monthly check in meetings and provide regular project status updates.
8. Track the number of residences served and data on the characteristics of participants and fuels reduced.
9. Work cooperatively with the District Manager and Conservation Specialist at the SWCD as well as project partners (Oregon State Fire Marshall, Hood River Forest Collaborative, and the Mount Adams Resource Stewards) to coordinate planning, implementation, record keeping, and reporting.

Scope:

The Conservation Technician will work in the office as well as in the field and around residences in Hood River County. They will work cooperatively with the Fire Risk Reduction Specialist with the Oregon State Fire Marshall, Hood River Forest Collaborative, Mount Adams Resource Stewards, the SWCD Conservation Specialist, and under the direct supervision of the District Manager. Professional attitude and judgement is required. The ability to work with "hard to reach populations" and other residents of Hood River County in a professional and equitable manner is required. Due to the nature of office and field work, communication with co-workers is essential. The ability to develop and maintain good professional relationships with co-workers, directors, other agency personnel, and the public is essential.

Minimum Requirements:

- At least one year of post high school undergraduate education required in applied, biological, forestry, or agricultural sciences OR equivalent education/experience
- Ability to communicate proficiently using oral, written and listening skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member, work independently, and be self-motivated.
- Proficiency in the use of personal computers, smartphones, and software, including word processing and spreadsheets.

Preferred Qualifications:

- A bachelor's degree in a relevant field

- Demonstrated experience with forestry and community engagement
- Knowledge of wildfire risk reduction

Job Expectations:

- Ability to read maps, GPS, and collect data.
- Keep accurate, detailed records, complete reports, enter data as needed, and regularly communicate with SWCD staff. Training will be provided.
- Work flexible hours.
- Ability to interact appropriately with a variety of individuals.
- Ability to complete tasks without direct supervision.
- Ability to continually learn and willingness to readily adjust to unexpected changes in tasks.
- Ability to prioritize and arrange events with landowners and chipping contractor.
- This position requires fieldwork and office work. Driving to and from field activities will be required. Employees are required to provide their own reliable vehicle. Mileage will be reimbursed. While using private vehicles for official business, employees must have current automobile liability insurance and possess a valid driver's license.

This position is an at-will, non-exempt, hourly position that may be hired at the full time or part time schedule. Under this classification, the employee is ineligible for benefits.

Apply by submitting a brief letter describing how your experience and training support the major responsibilities and qualifications for the position. Include a resume and three references. **Applications due by Friday, February 26th**. Screening applications will begin and will continue until the position has been filled.

Send application materials (email preferred) to Heather Hendrixson, Hood River SWCD, 3007 Experiment Station Dr., Hood River, OR 97031. Phone 541-386-4588 or email Heather@hoodriverswcd.org.